

Lev Gershenzon



My husband Lev Gershenzon, photographed after defending his diploma in Odessa University. This photo was taken in Odessa in 1936.

I met my second husband Lev Gershenzon, his Jewish name is Leib, when I was on vacation in Mogilyov-Podolskiy. He was a teacher of chemistry at an evening school. Lev was born in 1914 in Shargorod town of Vinnitsa region [about 350 km from Kiev]. Shortly after Lev was born - before the revolution - his father Abram Gershenzon moved to USA. He didn't have any contacts with his family. Lev was the youngest of all children. He had two older brothers: Moisey and Aron. Lev's mother died from typhus in 1918. Their relatives sent Moisey to a children's home. Aron was raised in his uncle's family and Lev was raised by his grandmother. Lev finished 8 forms of the 8-year Jewish general education school in Shargorod and went to Vinnitsa to continue his studies. He worked as a loader at the railway station during a day and in the evening he attended a rabfak school. He finished the rabfak with honors and was sent to the Chemical Faculty of Odessa University. He lived in the dormitory. To earn his living he unloaded railcars at night. Lev finished his college with honors and got a job assignment to work as a teacher of chemistry and biology in the Jewish general education school in Chernivtsy Vinnitsa region [about 300 km from Kiev] where he married a local Jewish girl. In 1938 their daughter Sophia was born.